United Nations A/C.2/64/SR.7

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
20 October 2009

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 7 October 2009, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Mićić (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Serbia)

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09-54573 (E)

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In the absence of Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mićić (Serbia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives) said that his country, which belonged to two of the three most vulnerable groups identified by the United Nations — the least developed countries and small island developing States — had been severely affected by the economic and financial crisis, compounding the challenges it already faced, including in its continued efforts at recovery from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The current global recession had exacerbated the country's fiscal situation and would probably hinder its progress towards meeting the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations should thus renew its efforts to design a global economy that addressed inequality and redressed global imbalances in finance and trade regimes. In that regard, the international community must demonstrate flexibility and the political will needed to break the impasse in negotiations for an early, successful and development-oriented conclusion of the Doha Development Round by 2010.

2. To ensure the smooth transition of the Maldives from least developed country status to a middle-income developing country by the end of 2010, a process that the General Assembly had decided to defer in 2004 due to the extensive damage caused by the tsunami, the country needed special and differential treatment and commitment from its partners. He drew attention to the Economic and Social Council's recent adoption by consensus of a resolution co-sponsored by his delegation for an independent, system-wide assessment of the effectiveness of support for small island developing States (E/2009/L.35).

3. The new Government in the Maldives had initiated major economic reform to reduce government expenditure, in consultation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, but would also need assistance from its development partners.

4. For the Maldives, climate change was an everyday reality that forced it to divert its limited resources from strategic development to recovery and reconstruction. In that respect, the international community should commit resources to help the poorest and most vulnerable countries to adapt to climate change, and reach an ambitious and effective agreement at the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen to limit average global temperature increases to below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. His Government planned to make the Maldives carbon-neutral by 2010.

5. **Mr. Askarov** (Uzbekistan) said that the Committee should actively and efficiently coordinate and channel Member States' intellectual, technological and resource potential to find a sustainable solution to the multiple crises which the world was facing. Fundamental reform of the global and financial and banking systems was needed to respond to the multi-faceted world economic and financial crisis, which was being exacerbated by protectionist policies of the largest economies. Alleviating the effects of climate change would require an understanding of its underlying causes and coordinated action. Developed countries should take the lead in that regard and shoulder the bulk of the burden. The international community must achieve a just and comprehensive deal at the upcoming Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, and develop mechanisms to analyse and predict climate change accurately, so as to improve coordination with a view to achieving effective management of climate risks and developing adaptation measures.

6. The international community also needed to engage in closer cooperation to ensure food security, and draw on modern technological advances to increase food production. As the shortage of freshwater impeded food production, States must endeavour to achieve sustainable management of water resources in rural regions in particular. In that respect, Uzbekistan endorsed the views of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) that freshwater should be primarily used for food production. He noted that Uzbekistan had reached food and energy independence in the mid-1990s and was a major exporter of vegetables, fruit and wheat to countries of the former Soviet Union. As Uzbekistan was home to nearly half the population of Central Asia, his delegation had the moral duty to lead coordination efforts to help resolve the food production problem. It had been affected more than other countries in the region by the shrinking of the Aral Sea, which exacerbated desertification in the area and affected agricultural production. Furthermore, water supply from the major rivers of Central Asia was lower than the annual norms, making it difficult to provide the necessary amounts of water for drinking and irrigation

in the region, where 65 per cent of the population lived in rural areas and depended directly on development of the agricultural sector.

7. His delegation strongly believed that all hydropower installations at transboundary rivers should undergo obligatory international expert appraisals under the auspices of the United Nations. Unless immediate action was taken in that regard, the livelihood of tens of millions in Central Asia would be at serious risk. A balanced water and energy situation in Central Asia should be ensured through constructive dialogue and based on consensus among countries in the region.

8. **Mr. Tanin** (Afghanistan) said that Member States must work together in the face of the challenges posed by the economic crisis, food insecurity, the eradication of poverty in developing countries, climate change and sustainable development. Afghanistan was committed to a range of initiatives which prioritized the needs of least developed countries in the current environment, such as the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, and hoped to add the resolution of the Doha Development Round to that list.

9. Afghanistan's development capacity had been particularly threatened by the financial crisis. In that respect, official development assistance (ODA) and foreign aid to his country and other least developed countries and countries with special needs must be effective, consistent and predictable. Immediate steps should be taken to ensure accountability and transparency, donor coordination and fulfilment of commitments to ensure the effective use and channelling of aid. Afghanistan would otherwise face difficulties implementing its national development strategy and internationally agreed development goals such as the Millennium Development Goals. Better coordinated development programmes and increased aid were needed to help Afghanistan to develop its agriculture and ensure food security. There was a desperate need in Afghanistan, as in other developing countries, to eradicate poverty, and in that respect, he hoped that the second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty would be the last.

10. Since climate change would affect all countries, it was vital for all to recognize the need for a successful outcome of the Copenhagen Conference, and support the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto and Montreal Protocols. As a post-co .flict country, Afghanistan was confronted with a number of difficult challenges. While sustainable development had often been sidelined in post-conflict situations, both short- and long-term projects should be undertaken as those might be the only way to establish enduring security and reduce dependence on foreign aid. Regional cooperation was also key to finding a solution in Afghanistan and in other post-conflict States, as was South-South and North-South cooperation. He hoped that Afghanistan's use as a bridge within the greater region would be reinvigorated through the expansion of regional energy, trade and transit markets and a coordinated effort to eliminate the narcotics trade.

11. **Ms. Rubiales de Chamorro** (Nicaragua) expressed concern about the worsening global economic situation, which left millions of persons unemployed and poor, and the global food, energy and environmental crises. Her delegation welcomed the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group established to follow up on issues contained in the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development. She hoped that developed countries would significantly and effectively contribute to the upcoming High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

12. Her delegation rejected the use of unilateral economic measures, which violated the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In that respect, she looked forward to the Committee's review of the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/183 on unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries and called on the Committee to ensure that specific, immediate and effective measures were taken to stop the undermining of those countries' right to development.

13. She hoped for substantial progress at the upcoming High-Level Conference on World Food Security. In addition, the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen should be an opportunity for developed countries to fulfil their historic responsibility under the Kyoto Protocol and stop trying to undermine the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

14. The link between disarmament and development was clear: the sums being spent worldwide for military purposes while so many persons died of hunger, thirst or preventable disease were staggering. Moreover, the maintenance and establishment of foreign military bases in developing countries was a matter of deep concern, as they threatened peace and security at the regional level in particular.

15. She noted that Nicaragua had just been declared free of illiteracy by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and enjoyed free health care and education, and FAO had rated the country's school nutrition programme among the four best in the world. Nicaragua had also developed renewable sources of alternative energy, all made possible through cooperation with the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA).

16. Consumer societies were incompatible with the safeguarding of natural and energy resources, so vital to the development and preservation of the human species. A new global economic order was thus needed, and developed nations in particular must support the efforts of countries in the South to exercise their legitimate right to development and build their own future.

17. **Mr. Hernández-Milian** (Costa Rica) said that the Second Committee must primarily be a multilateral space for action going beyond standardized language and beyond the ritual repetition of resolutions that reappeared every year, often to limited effect. It must be a forum where ideas were brought together to overcome the barriers that blocked participants' collective creativity and capacity to generate positive change in an unequal and unfair world. The Committee must be the front line of attack, using consistent and action-oriented resolutions, to overcome the obstacles in the way of collective sustainable development.

18. The impact of the financial and economic crisis on the world and in particular on the possibilities for development had been mentioned often enough. There was no doubt that the present crisis represented a threat, particularly in the poorer countries, to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Without decisive action, millions of people every day would swell the ranks of those living in extreme poverty. It was imperative for the international community to fulfil the commitments that had emerged from the various international forums, if development objectives were not to be jeopardized. An important step in the year ahead would be the 2010 summit to review the progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals. For Costa Rica, that was a priority task: it was not just a matter of achieving satisfactory macro-economic indicators but, rather, of meeting each goal with a focus on the human being, investing strategically in people's overall development. That meant providing more education, better health and greater opportunities for work and well-being. It meant sustainable management of natural resources, because genuine development went hand in hand with the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

19. The Committee must issue a resounding call to the international community to act responsibly in support of sustainable economic development. Given the impact of the global economic and financial crisis, medium-income countries, such as Costa Rica, needed to be provided with meaningful financial and technical resources and knowledge. The United Nations needed to promote the exchange of information, experience and best practices between medium-income countries and others, in a spirit of international cooperation and within the framework of the Monterrey Consensus establishing the mutual responsibility between developed and developing countries for the achievement of development goals.

20. Costa Rica was a country that, historically, had given a practical demonstration of the relationship between disarmament and development. As a democracy without armed forces, Costa Rica deplored the fact that ever-increasing resources worldwide were spent on military aims that otherwise could have assisted with development needs. It was illogical that, with increasing numbers succumbing to poverty in the economic crisis, the world was investing more in instruments of death and destruction. That belief would guide Costa Rica in the deliberations of the Second Committee.

21. Turning to the environmental crisis, manifested primarily in the dramatic evidence and effects of climate change, he said that mankind's future depended on what it now did or failed to do. The crisis of climate change brought with it the risk of losing humanity's sole common heritage, challenging the world to think in terms of an ecologically interdependent world community. As the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference approached, it was time to take the right decisions, which had been often postponed. Success would be possible with multilateral and global measures that were transparent, coordinated and credible, with specific plans of action and realistic verification arrangements, and programmes of

international cooperation that broke the cycle of inaction and disenchantment.

22. There was much to be done. Costa Rica, for example, with its valuable experience in the development of capacities and methodologies for the reduction of emissions due to deforestation, stood ready to make its contribution to efforts to establish a path of low-carbon development. That would require the establishment of instruments to allow countries to participate, by guaranteeing stable and adequate sources of financing.

23. **Mr. Khachab** (Lebanon) said that, with the current global food, energy and financial crises, with the threats of climate change, and with the persistence of violent conflicts, the spectre of poverty loomed over the world more threateningly than ever.

24. The magnitude and severity of the current international financial and economic crisis had challenged the world tremendously. In the advanced and developed countries, the crisis had been essentially a financial one. However, owing to the globalization of markets, the crisis had rapidly spread to the developing countries, affecting the real economy and in turn leading to a social crisis, which, if not addressed promptly, might lead to political unrest and turmoil.

25. In addition, the crisis was negatively impacting the financial and economic stability of developing countries, which were diverting resources originally earmarked for development to cope with the crisis. Their efforts towards the eradication of poverty and hunger and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, were being frustrated, along with their national development strategies and goals. Moreover, the financial and economic crisis had been further compounded by the food crisis, by the volatility in energy prices and by the adverse impacts of climate change.

26. A global stimulus package must be adopted in order to help developing countries recover economically; they could not be left to address the crisis alone. The developed countries must not go back on their commitments, but rather should increase their assistance by providing adequate and predictable financial resources, without conditionality.

27. The crisis had revealed the pressing need to reform the international financial and economic system in order to meet the realities and challenges of the twenty-first century. The Bretton Woods institutions, and particularly their governance structure, must be radically reformed in order to increase the voice and participation of developing countries in the process of decision-making and norm-setting.

28. A comprehensive approach to sustainable development, based on its three pillars of economic development, social development and protection of the environment, was more than ever a necessity. Implementation of the agreements reached in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and in Johannesburg in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development was even more relevant and urgent now than then.

29. Lebanon welcomed the offer by Brazil to host a summit on sustainable development in 2012 to review progress in the implementation of the Outcomes of those two important meetings. It also welcomed the FAO World Summit on Food Security, to be held in Rome in November, as an opportunity to discuss an integrated approach to food security that could allow comprehensive and durable solutions. Special attention should be given to the needs of Africa.

30. It was vital that the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference should reach a landmark agreement based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Lebanon urged the developed countries to undertake ambitious commitments for the period beyond 2012.

31. **Mr. Jgenti** (Georgia) said that at present the international community as a whole was facing one of the most difficult times in its history. Climate change and the ongoing financial crisis were threatening not only humanity's short-term goals, but its very existence. The need to find a solution was a matter of life or death. The time had come for the international community to do everything possible to end global warming once and for all, securing the future for generations to come.

32. Transition to a low-carbon economy would entail identification and application of policies targeting climate change, poverty eradication and economic competitiveness. Renewable energies, over and above their energy efficiency benefits, were crucial to halting climate change, and, as part of its efforts to combat climate change, Georgia was producing 85 per cent of its electricity from green and renewable sources.

33. The understanding of the global challenge and the determination to solve it, as expressed by world leaders during the Summit on Climate Change, were encouraging. It was imperative that the political agreement be transformed into an active negotiation process, enabling countries to reach a common position in Copenhagen. Climate change would also constitute a threat to global security: the increase in the frequency and intensity of droughts would escalate food security problems in countries which were already experiencing shortages of food and water, while world food demand was increasing rapidly owing to population growth. Unable to supply their populations with domestically produced food, many countries would increase their demand for food imports. The world market might not be able to satisfy the demand, which would strain relations between countries.

34. At the same time, the whole world realized that the current global economic crisis must be addressed urgently. Every country had been impacted by its negative effects, which showed once again that the international community would be able to overcome the crisis only by a collective effort, an effort that could be underpinned by the exchange of views among Member States in the Second Committee on how to prevent a recurrence.

35. It was imperative that the recovery, when it was eventually achieved, be sustainable. The international community should therefore direct its efforts towards creating more inclusive labour markets, effective labour policies, quality education and relevant training programmes.

36. **Mr. Martins** (Angola) observed that the global economy was grappling with an unprecedented financial and economic crisis. No one country or group of countries could isolate itself from the effects of the challenges, and the prospects for world economic recovery were still not clear. For that reason, Committee members must contribute to pivotal decisions to enable adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of the crisis. Those decisions must take into account the need to reach a global agreement on trade and to improve the levels of ODA and capital flows to developing countries. The Second Committee was particularly well placed to reaffirm the international community's resolve to cooperate in addressing the economic and financial challenges to development. The decisions and resolutions to be adopted in the coming weeks must translate countries' collective political will into policy recommendations on the full range of agenda items before the Committee. Angola urged all delegations to be bold, flexible and, most importantly, fully aware that in a globalized economy national policies often had transnational effects.

37. The global economic slowdown threatened to undo the progress made by developing countries towards achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. In the case of Angola, a country emerging from a long and destructive conflict, the collapse of commodity prices had reduced the country's ability to make critical investments in infrastructure, human development or the development of trade and productive capacities so necessary to consolidate the peace.

38. It was unacceptable that long-standing systemic fragilities and imbalances should continue to have negative impacts on development. The international community must pursue the reform of the international financial system, and the universal membership and legitimacy of the United Nations made it well placed to produce the necessary political impetus.

39. Angola was encouraged by the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, and welcomed the international community's recognition of the need for a more coordinated and comprehensive response to mitigate the negative impact of the global financial crisis, in particular on the developing countries, and address the long-standing need for structural reform to prevent a recurrence of such economic turmoil.

40. Food security was an overriding concern of the African continent, owing to its importance to health, productivity, social and political stability and economic growth. Angola welcomed the convening of the World Summit on Food Security on 16 and 17 November 2009, expressing the hope that the Summit would translate political will into concrete actions to assist developing countries in implementing national food security plans and strategies.

41. Angola was certain that a rule-based, non-discriminatory and equitable trading system could contribute to the improvement of global food security, as could stable commodity prices, improved governance, enhanced participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making

and sustainable solutions to the problems of developing country debt. Angola stressed the urgent need for the international community to take effective measures to support developing countries in implementing their national plans for food security, through technology transfer, institutional capacity-building and technical assistance.

42. The global nature of climate change called for the widest possible cooperation among all countries in response, based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, respective capabilities and national circumstances. Climate change had far-reaching consequences for the development prospects of developing countries, including effects on food security, national development plan and strategy implementation, and achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

43. As a State Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, Angola was committed to its full implementation and looked forward to the successful completion of the negotiations on a second commitment period. Any emissions regime to be agreed must take into account the needs of the developing countries, particularly with regard to access to technology and financial assistance for adapting to climate change and developing competitive green economies. Angola urged developed countries to undertake ambitious commitments for the period beyond 2012.

44. **Mr. Seif Ali Iddi** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the economic recession in the developed world had been affecting the Tanzanian economy in a number of ways. Even the claimed economic recovery in the developed countries would take a long while to register in small economies such as that of the United Republic of Tanzania. Macroeconomic projections and policy targets for the period 2009-2012 indicated that real GDP growth was expected to drop from 7.4 per cent in 2008 to 5.0 per cent in 2009 and to begin to recover in 2010. While his Government appealed for support for its efforts to deal with the crisis, it also remained cognizant of its responsibility to do whatever was in its power to cope with its effects, by taking measures such as stepping up regular supervision of the banking system, establishing an early warning system, using selected indicators of financial sector performance to monitor developments on a daily basis and continuing reforms focused on risk management in the country's financial sector as a whole.

45. The various measures taken by his country to cope with the impact of the crisis had meant that, despite the global liquidity squeeze, overall confidence in the country's financial sector had remained strong, which had allowed the domestic financial markets and payment systems to continue functioning. As a result of those efforts, all indicators of financial sector stability, including capital adequacy and liquidity ratios, had remained strong. Notwithstanding the effects of the recent global financial crisis, there continued to be robust growth in credit provided to the private sector. During the first 10 months of fiscal 2008/09, credit provided by the commercial banks to the private sector recorded an average growth rate of 38.9 per cent, higher than the initial target of 30.5 per cent but slightly lower than the revised target of 39.8 per cent that had been set in order to finance the anticipated 7.5 per cent real GDP growth for 2008-2009. The United Republic of Tanzania thanked its partners for their help so far and requested their continued support in addressing the multiple crises facing the country.

46. The impact of the financial crisis and economic slowdown on the ability of developing countries to gain access to the financing necessary for their development objectives made it clear that they were at risk of very serious setbacks to their development objectives, in particular their achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

47. Most developing countries had undertaken economic and governance reforms inspired by the Millennium Declaration of 2000 and agreed in the Monterrey Consensus of 2002. However, the multiple crises facing those countries had been threatening the success they had achieved in a number of areas including employment, education, poverty reduction and child and maternal health. The review of the Millennium Development Goals in 2010 should take into account the challenges facing poor countries such as his own in meeting targets, as the multiple crises had by implication moved the target date beyond 2015. The United Nations system must recognize the importance of promoting full employment and decent work for all, the theme of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty. It was essential that sufficient jobs be created to accommodate the growing

population as well as those who remained unemployed and underemployed.

48. As one of eight countries that had volunteered to pilot the One UN initiative, the United Republic of Tanzania supported the United Nations reforms and believed that the sixty-third session of the General Assembly had provided supplementary information that had been helpful to delegations. His delegation urged Member States to give a chance to those reforms in order to make headway at the sixty-fourth session. It should be noted that, while there was a need to package all the issues under the single undertaking on United Nations reform, care should be taken to avoid a situation in which the perfect became the enemy of the good.

49. His country had been taking measures to invest in the agricultural sector, but needed to do so on a larger scale. The Government had decided to continue its concentration on the agriculture sector with a view to addressing domestic and international demand for food, and had been putting in place best modalities to enable peasants and farmers to participate fully in productive and sustainable agriculture, create agro-businesses and develop markets.

50. The volatility of commodity prices, exacerbated by the economic and financial crisis, was a matter of great concern to least developed countries. In combination with the slowdown of the negotiations on the Doha Development Round, and the fact that the food and energy crises had been depleting the financial reserves of developing countries, the economic prospects of countries such as his own were left in a perilous state.

51. The current system of debt repayment was quite unfair. Countries found themselves indebted not through their own volition but rather because of the recycling of old debt that had been taken on in the absence of a debt sustainability framework. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Restructuring Initiative might not go far enough to relieve the external debt of the United Republic of Tanzania.

52. His country's debt situation mirrored that of many other sub-Saharan African countries that had qualified for relief: initially, there had been a substantial lowering of debt, but the relief had been only temporary, because the country had to continue to borrow to address its development needs while ensuring repayment of existing debt. The international community should resume the discussion of the cancellation of old debts.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.